

Fall Training: Questions & Answers

Please note: some questions are paraphrased or combined with like-questions for clarity.

EBT Questions:

Question: How do you change regular milk to lactose free after loading?

Answer: The process should remain the same, void and re-issue new food package. If there is a change in policy or procedure we will train on this as the project proceeds.

Question: If a child is placed in foster care and mom already got 3 months issued, how to handle?

Answer: The process should not change, and may in fact be easier. The foster parent would be issued the remaining benefits on checks (now) or a new card (EBT) and the old checks would be voided or the old card would be de-activated. If the mom has other family members on her original card just the foster child would be separated out. As this is electronic it will be done in the computer and the mother should be contacted and informed that those benefits are not to be used by her.

Question: Can other state's EBT cards be used in Montana?

Answer: No

Question: How do we handle formula return/reissuance?

Answer: We anticipate the process will be the same with EBT as it is currently. You will still need to assess how much is returned/unused and re-issue correct amount.

Question: What do you do if you issued 3 months of benefits to a family and then find out mom is pregnant and only want them to have 2 months?

Answer: You can adjust issuance in the system with EBT. Keep in mind that pregnant women are also eligible for 3 months of benefits.

Question: When they receive their card will they also receive a list of their benefits?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Will Montana allow people to go over on the fruit and vegetable benefit and use cash or SNAP for remainder?

Answer: Yes. However, it depends on the store's point of sale (POS) system and if it is capable of taking multiple forms of payment/tender.

Question: What if a product scanned has an error in price and it denies, what will the client do?

Answer: These issues will be resolved as the project progresses.

Question: How often will participants have to change their PIN?

Answer: It is too soon to completely answer this question, however, we will train on policy and procedure at a later time.

Question: If someone's WIC appt. is the 10th or 20th of the month would you have them come in the month before so they are in advance?

Answer: The account is activated the day of the appt. With month to month issuance all participants will be on the same schedule of benefits starting the first day of the month.

Question: Would Montana WIC (EBT) transfer to other states like SNAP?

Answer: No.

Question: Will clients be charged if they lose their card a certain number of times?

Answer: No.

Question: On the receipt example there were dollar amounts displayed, will that be on the receipts?

Answer: Yes, for purchases.

Question: If a client leaves the program and then in a year comes back, but has lost their card in that time, is it possible to inactivate the old card and issue a new card?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Will there be a time limit that needs to be used before a card is made inactive?

Answer: It is too soon to completely answer this question.

Question: For EBT and use of fruit and vegetable benefit at the Farmer's Market: Would participants not be able to use at marker? Would farmers need an EBT only machine? Would it be different from SNAP?

Answer: It is too soon to completely answer this question.

Question: Will participants be able to use self-checkout?

Answer: It is too soon to completely answer this question.

Question: Will participants be able to keep all grocery items together like SNAP? Will the EBT system be able to separate out what is a WIC purchase?

Answer: It will depend on the store's POS system.

Question: What will be the procedure to do food package changes?

Answer: No different than at this time, if policy or procedure change, we will provide training.

Question: How will we at the clinic be able to look up what a participant has left on their benefits?

Answer: You will receive training on this.

Question: What happens if they go over the price limit?

Answer: It is too soon to completely answer this question.

Question: Do clients have to activate their card by phone before using?

Answer: The card does have to be activated, but there are different options for how it may be done. Policies will be written and staff will receive training on this at a later time.

Question: How do we handle formula changes?

Answer: No different than at this time, if policy or procedure change, we will provide training.

Question: With EBT will we be able to change food packages such as adding benefits to a woman's package who goes from substantially to fully breastfeeding, more formula for an infant who is decreasing breastfeeding and altering milk/cheese (and other substitutes).

Answer: Yes, you will be able to alter packages based on breastfeeding changes and be able to add benefits. At this time we advise to only change future months benefits with regard to substitution changes, however, we will review policies related to EBT as the process progresses.

Question: Any changes required of vendors to use EBT system?

Answer: JP Morgan and the State office will be working with retailers on the process.

Question: Can the new packet be designed to have a special pocket for receipts?

Answer: This is a good idea and we welcome suggestions for packet design.

Question: Is there any protection against selling card and pin #?

Answer: This is considered fraud. We will consider card security as we write policies related to EBT.

Question: Will the State provide a DVD to show clients about EBT?

Answer: Training materials will be provided, we will welcome suggestions for training materials as they are developed.

Question: Will Farm Direct benefits be paper or EBT?

Answer: This is still to be determined.

Question: Will each participant have a card or will the whole family have just one?

Answer: One card for the whole family.

Question: How will card issuance be handled with proxy/authorized representative?

Answer: This has not been determined at this time.

Question: Since WIC employees will not know participant PINs, what happens if a participant forgets?

Answer: See presentation by Misi Higgins on EBT 101. We will be training on these processes as EBT is rolled out.

Question: How fast do benefits show up on the card?

Answer: Current month is loaded immediately, next months would be active at 12:01 am the day they are due to start.

General Questions:

Question: For the End of Cert. notification, could we print notice at certification to show clients right away how long their cert is good for and ensure all participants receive paperwork?

Answer: No. However, we are researching a way in SPIRIT to run a report on which participant's certifications are ending, therefore making it easier to send end of cert notices to those who missed an appointment. Also, if a participant fails to pick up benefits and is dropped after 2 months of inactivity, it is not required that they received the end of cert notice.

Question: If you certify an infant at 9 months and check their hemoglobin, do you still check at 12 months? And again when they recertify?

Answer: No. You would check hemoglobin at certification (both at 9 and 15 months) and also at mid-certification, which would fall at about 21 months in this situation.

Question: Should care plans be in the SOAP note or in the alert? Please give us standards of care plan so we know our parameters.

Answer: A care plan should be entered under "P" in the SOAP ("p" stands for plan). The alerts disappear in the system and are not a reliable form of documentation. The care plan was covered in 6.2 of the 2013 State Plan and has been updated in the 2014 State Plan. In addition, see the slides on Monitoring and State Plan updates for examples and more detail. You may go on to document changes or updates to original care plan in either a general note or SOAP note at follow up visits.

Question: When will the abbreviation list be ready for all local WIC agencies to use?

Answer: We are working on this.

Question: I have gotten very little education on vitamin D, could some educational materials be sent through the newsletter?

Answer: We posted some vitamin D resources in the July 15th newsletter linked here <http://wic.mt.gov/newsletters/2013/N-07-15-13Newsletter.shtml>, in addition, WICWorks is an excellent resource <http://wicworks.nal.usda.gov/topics-z/vitamin-d>. Also, there is a new module for wichealth.org being developed about vitamin D specifically for Montana, we will post in the newsletter when that is available.

Question: Do the suggested topics we select have to be documented in the SOAP note and do I have to choose one?

Answer: No. These topics are suggestions and may be used to trigger ideas for education, either in the current session or for future visits in the care plan. We do not consider the chosen ones as education given, nor do we require that any are selected.

Question: Is it OK to chart package tailoring in general note instead?

Answer: Yes, either in SOAP or a general note is fine.

Question: On the mid-cert form, is the goal result in the middle supposed to follow the cert goal? And do we set another goal under the "P" section of the SOAP note.

Answer: If the goal at certification is selected in the system, ideally, you would follow up at the next appointment (3 months later), and yes, if goal is met please assist the participant in setting a new goal and document this in the chart. To document the goal results you may go into the nutrition tab and highlight the original goal and then click the "edit" button to select the result. However, most staff document follow up to the goal in a SOAP note or general note and that is fine. In fact, manually putting in a client-stated goal in the SOAP ("O" or "P") and manually following up is more individualized and preferred. Please note, while the state plan (chapter 6.2) refers to the goal being documented within the care plan, system assigned goals load into the "O" section, and therefore we will check both places.

Question: Is it enough to state "discussed breastfeeding" as breastfeeding education.

Answer: While it is preferable to be more specific, it would be considered adequate as stated above. Keep in mind that this is also to communicate with your co-workers and other agencies should the participant transfer, more detail is helpful in these situations.

Question: How do we access a language line for interpretive service needed in local clinics?

Answer: Your local agency would need to set up a contract with a language interpretation service such as <http://www.language.com/>. There are other companies that provide this service as well, this is not a service the state provides for clinic. Check with your director or Health Officer to see if there is already a contract on file.

Question: How do other clinics line up whole family when kids aren't all on the same schedule?

Answer: This is going to be case by case, it all depends on who is due for what. With month to month issuance all benefits will run on a calendar month, so at least you will not have to be changing issue dates as new family members come on. If family members are due for certs or mid-certs at different times, do your best to line them up, and when possible prioritizing the infant's schedule.

Question: With the newest download, why is there such a lag time between clicking the check print icon and when the checks start to print? Will this be fixed?

Answer: Benefit issuance is a complex function and spirit has traditionally had issues with performance. The new release did increase processing but the time to print did not increase very much. This problem may be related to networking and printer set up, please call the help desk.

Question: Comment related to discussion on income for certification: If monthly income cannot be determined because the participant is in transition (new job, lost job, etc.) can you just use year to date?

Answer: No. The income should be reflective of the person's true status. Yearly should only be used if that is more reflective of the person's true income (i.e seasonal, teacher, fluctuating income). See slides on state plan update and call the state office if you have a question about a specific circumstance.

Question: Where do participants get soy milk? We have several stores which do not carry soy?

Answer: Stores are not required to carry soy milk, so there may be stores who choose not to carry. Many chain and large stores do carry soy and if one of these stores is in your area you may check with them.

Question: Please discuss the recent breastfeeding survey we were all required to fill out. When will we have access to breastfeeding reports for our clinic/counties/state?

Answer: The survey was done on a national level, not by the state, so we won't be releasing any data from that survey. After the next release for SPIRIT many of the breastfeeding reports will be fixed and you will be able to run them. A list of these reports is posted in the breastfeeding peer counselor conference call minutes on the website from the August 28th meeting. In addition, we are working with an epidemiologist from the

NAPA and Tobacco program which will be helping us to interpret our data, including breastfeeding rates. We will be letting you all know when that data will be released.

Question: If declaring race and ethnicity is optional, why can't we pass it in the demographic portion of MSPIRIT?

Answer: It is optional for the participant, we are required to ask them to self-declare, if they decline we are required to choose the best option. In other words, it is not optional for staff, only the participant.

Question: For pregnant women, even if high risk, only see every 3 months?

Answer: Yes, although it is still the discretion of the CPA to determine frequency of contact based on the situation.

Question: Risk code 121 (short stature), do we refer or wait for recheck?

Answer: Refer for all infants with this code. For code 135 (inadequate growth) refer after re-check.

Question: For some of our fully breastfeeding mom's, the infant baby foods are too much, especially at the 9-11 month of age, sometimes it is possible to issue the child package after 11 months of age, would there ever be a possibility to change infant package to child package and remove milk and cheese?

Answer: No.

Question: In CGS can we scan or view scanned documents?

Answer: IT will research and make a request for this change.

Question: Please make a differentiation between inadequate growth in height to inadequate gain in weight.

Answer: This code is defined by USDA FNS, we cannot alter the definition or change SPIRIT to code differently. However, you are welcome to document in your assessment.

Question: If a child has a low hemoglobin at certification, we only check it again at mid-certification?

Answer: Yes. All children under 2 will receive a hemoglobin check at mid-cert and all children 2-5 years of age will receive a re-check only if it was low at certification. If re-check is low, refer according to high risk chart to RD and healthcare provider.